

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5730

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 4458

NODIS-CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJ: PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM IAN SMITH

1. AT MEETING CONVENED BY BRAND FOURIE IN HIS OFFICE
AT 5 P.M., RHODESIAN REPRESENTATIVE HAROLD HAWKINS GAVE
TO FOURIE, BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND ME THE FOLLOWING
PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM IAN SMITH ADDRESSED TO SECRETARY
CROSLAND, SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRIME MINISTER VORSTER.
HAWKINS MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS IS A SECRET COMMUNICATION
FOR THE ADDRESSEES AND NOT TO BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS.
COMMENT FOLLOWS IN SEPTTEL.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

IN MY ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON 25TH SEPTEMBER I INDICATED
THAT MY ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS HAD BEEN FORCED ON ME BY THE
WESTERN POWERS WHO HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN OUR FIGHT AGAINST
TERRORISM AND IN OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THE PRESENT RHODESIAN
GOVERNMENT COULD EXPECT NO HELP OR SUPPORT OF ANY KIND FROM THE
WEST BUT THAT, ON THE CONTRARY, IF I DID NOT ACCEPT THE
PROPOSALS THE PRESSURES ON RHODESIA WOULD BE PROGRESSIVELY
INCREASED.

I HAVE FREQUENTLY WARNED IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND IN EXCHANGES
WITH GOVERNMENTS THAT A RAPID HANDOVER TO BLACK RULE IN
RHODESIA WOULD LEAD TO CHAOS WHICH THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE
QUICK TO EXPLOIT AND WHICH WOULD CAUSE THE GREAT MAJORITY OF
WHITES TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THESE VIEWS ARE BY NO MEANS

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CONFINED TO MEMBERS OF MY GOVERNMENT. THEY HAVE BEEN

STATED REPEATEDLY TO BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES BY MY POLITICAL OPPONENTS AND BY A WIDE RANGE OF RHODESIAN INDUSTRIALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN.

IN FORCING ME INTO THE POSITION WHERE I HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ACCEPT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED HAVE DISCOUNTED MY OWN VIEWS AND THOSE OF THE RESPONSIBLE RHODESIANS WHOM I HAVE MENTIONED. THIS PLACES ON THE SHOULDERS OF THESE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT NOW ENSUES IN RHODESIA.

DESPITE MY MISGIVINGS I HAVE GONE OUT OF MY WAY TO TRY TO MAKE THESE PROPOSALS ACCEPTABLE TO WHITE RHODESIANS AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH RESPONSIBLE MAJORITY RULE BY A GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WHITE PEOPLE IN MAINTAINING THE STABILITY OF THE ECONOMY AND THE DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY AND WHICH WOULD GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAY. IN SOME QUARTERS MY EFFORTS WERE GREETED WITH SCEPTICISM, BUT I PERSISTED IN THE SPIRIT AS WELL AS THE LETTER OF THE AGREEMENT WE REACHED IN PRETORIA. MY STATEMENT TO THE NATION WAS COINED IN LANGUAGE DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE WHITE PEOPLE - AND, INDEED, MODERATE BLACK PEOPLE - TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WOULD BE A SECURE FUTURE FOR THEM IN AN INDEPENDENT RHODESIA.

THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO MY SPEECH WAS ONE OF CAUTIOUS SUPPORT COUPLED WITH DETERMINATION TO MAKE THE BEST OF THE ALTERED CIRCUMSTANCES. I MUST INFORM YOU, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE LAST TWO DAYS THERE HAS BEEN A MARKED CHANGE IN PUBLIC OPINION. THIS HAS BEEN CAUSED MAINLY BY THE MILITANT AND THE INTRANSIGENT ATTITUDE OF CERTAIN BLACK PRESIDENTS AND BY THE STATEMENTS OF NATIONALISTS SUCH AS MUGABE OF WHICH YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE. THE INCLUSION OF PRESIDENT NETO AT THIS LATE STAGE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE DISSILLUSIONMENT FELT HERE, FOR HE HAS NOTHING TO GAIN FROM A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT AND IS UNLIKELY TO EXERCISE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON RHODESIAN AFRICANS. THE FAILURE OF THE LATTER TO REACH ANY AGREEMENT AMONG THEMSELVES IS A FOREWARNING OF COMING POWER STRUGGLES.

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I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT I AM BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION. IF A MAN SUCH AS MUGABE IS PUT FORWARD BY THE BLACK PRESIDENTS AS A LEADER OF THE AFRICAN NATIONALISTS, THE EFFECT ON PUBLIC OPINION, BOTH AMONG WHITES AND AMONG BLACKS, WILL BE EXTREMELY SERIOUS. THIS MAN HAS A LONG RECORD OF COMMUNIST AFFILIATION AND HE IS NOW EMERGING AS THE APPARENT SPOKESMAN OF THE TERRORISTS BASED IN MOCAMBIQUE. HIS RECENT STATEMENTS AND THOSE OF THE TERRORIST LEADERS CAN LEAVE

NO ROOM FOR ANY DOUBT AS TO THEIR REAL INTENTION, WHICH IS TO ESTABLISH A MARXIST - TYPE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN RHODESIA ON THE MODEL OF THAT IN MOCAMBIQUE. IT APPEARS THAT IN THIS AIM THEY HAVE THE FULL SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT MACHEL.

IN THE LAST TWO DAYS I AND MY COLLEAGUES AND OTHER PERSONS IN AUTHORITY OR IN TOUCH WITH AFRICAN OPINION HAVE RECEIVED NUMEROUS EXPRESSIONS OF REAL FEAR ON THE PART OF ORDINARY PEACEFUL RHODESIAN AFRICANS WHO OWE NO ALLEGIANCE TO THE TERRORISTS AND WHO GIVE THEM NO SUPPORT OTHER THAN THAT WHICH IS EXTRACTED BY INTIMIDATION. THESE PEOPLE ARE IMPLORING US NOT TO HAND OVER THE GOVERNMENT OF RHODESIA TO THE MUGABES AND THEIR LIKE. THEY ARE INTELLIGENT PEOPLE - BUSINESSMEN, FARMERS, TEACHERS AND, INDEED, POLITICIANS - WHO HAVE THE EDUCATION AND THE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE TO APPRECIATE WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IF MEN LIKE MUGABE CAME TO POWER.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5731

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 PRETORIA 4458

NODIS-CHEROKEE

ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON I ADDRESSED A MEETING OF THE TOP CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE COUNTRY. I URGED THEM TO TAKE THE VIEW THAT IT WAS THEIR DUTY AS CIVIL SERVANTS TO DO ALL THEY CAN TO EASE THE TRANSITION TO MAJORITY GOVERNMENT AND I ASSURED THEM OF MY CONFIDENCE THAT IT WOULD BE A RESPONSIBLE MAJORITY GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD GIVE ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS REASONABLE PROSPECTS OF A SATISFYING CAREER IN A COUNTRY IN WHICH THEY WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN GROW UP AND BE EDUCATED. I MET WITH A FAVOURABLE RESPONSE. HOWEVER, AGAIN IN THIS FIELD THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY THIS WEEK. PUBLIC SERVANTS AT ALL LEVELS ARE NOW QUESTIONING THE VALIDITY OF MY ASSURANCES AND THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS

THAT MANY OF THEM WILL WANT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THEY HAVE NOTED THE REPORTED WORDS OF PRESIDENT NYERERE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE CONOMIC AID PROVIDED BY THE WESTERN WORLD SHOULD BE USED TO ENCOURAGE THE WHITES TO GO AND NOT TO STAY AND THEY HAVE NOTED SIMILAR REMARKS BY PRESIDENT MACHEL AND MUGABE. THEY ARE NOW ASKING THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE SPECIAL PROVISION FOR THEM TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE BEFORE INDEPENDENCE WITH TERMINAL BENEFITS TO COMPENSATE FOR LOSS OF CAREER.

OTHER IMPORTANT CATEGORIES IN A SIMILAR POSITION ARE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE STAFFS OF STATUTORY BODIES SUCH AS THE RHODESIA RAILWAYS AND THE POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION. THE LATTER HAVE SKILLS WHICH WOULD BE IN HIGH DEMAND ELSEWHERE AND THEIR DEPARTURE WOULD BE A CRIPPLING BLOW TO THE RHODESIAN ECONOMY.

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I AM PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEED TO MAINTAIN MORALE AND MOTIVATION IN THE SECURITY FORCES DURING THE PERIOD OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT BECAUSE SO FAR THERE IS NO INDICATION OF ANY INTENTION ON THE PART OF THE MOCAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT OR OF THE TERRORISTS OPERATING OUT OF THAT TERRITORY TO HALT THEIR ATTACKS. ON THE CONTRARY, I ANTICIPATE THAT THE LATTER WILL ENDEAVOUR, WITH COMMUNIST SUPPORT, TO ESTABLISH A FIRM FOOTHOLD IN A SECTOR OF RHODESIA ADJACENT TO THE MACAMBIQUE BORDER.

I FEEL THAT I MUST WARN YOU THAT, UNLESS STEPS ARE TAKEN URGENTLY TO REVERSE THE CURRENT TREND OF LOSS OF CONFIDENCE AMONG WHITE RHODESIANS, THE POSITION WILL CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE AND THERE WILL BE A REAL DANGER OF A COLLAPSE OF THE ECONOMY AND OF THE WHOLE COMPLEX STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT AND OF THE SECURITY FORCES. IF THIS SHOULD HAPPEN THE WESTERN POWERS WHO HAVE FORCED RHODESIA INTO THIS SITUATION WILL BEAR A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY. ENDS TEXT.
BOWDLER

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